

# THE GREEN CALDRON

A MAGAZINE OF FRESHMAN WRITING



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Members of the committee in charge of THE GREEN CALDRON are Phyllis Rice, Edward Levy, David Gladish, George Estey, and Carl Moon, Editor.

# THE GREEN CALDRON as a Freshman Writing Project

KATHERINE HIRT

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 11*

THE RHETORIC STAFF AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS undoubtedly performs one of the great inspirational acts of its career when selecting ingredients for *The Green Caldron* mixture. The components of this "melting pot" are chosen with thoughtful care.

Unknown to most freshmen, during their first semester's rhetoric experience, their teachers are clandestinely analyzing all 100, 101, and 102 papers in an effort to claim newly-found geni as the ultimate products of their teaching method. After selecting three or four outstanding themes from the semester's journalistic efforts, the more ambitious submit these gems to *The Caldron* staff, confident that at least one of this exceptional array will be published.

Much to Instructor Snodgrass's bewilderment and amazement, however, the next issue bears no trace of his students' masterpieces. What is wrong with the judges? Perhaps they are in need of education, sense of humor, or even glasses. Oh, well—resignedly, he begins to read *The Caldron* selections to test their qualities in comparison with his entries. But, alas, he is sadly disillusioned, for, in his opinion, these themes do not measure up to his rigorous standards. Discouraged, yet not without a faint vestige of hope, he prepares a careful plan of action to make certain that one of his students' chef-d'oeuvres will surely be included in the next issue.

Perhaps the quality of the themes actually is not much above the norm, or perhaps Professor Snodgrass's standards are too high for freshman writing. Perhaps, too, he is so interested in promoting his own students that his objectivity is malfunctioning. Certainly, in light of several past *Green Caldron* issues, the infallibility of the judges could be challenged. The writings are often choppy and incoherent, the author sometimes straying from his thesis. These digressions usually result in a serious loss of the "punch" as well as the unity of the papers, thus raising more questions in regard to effective writing techniques than supplying answers.

On the other hand, the large proportion of *Caldron* themes are excellent examples of how well-written papers should be developed, organized, and executed. However, what actually constitutes a "well written" paper or a "good" example of effective expression should always be the problem foremost in the minds of the judges when reviewing the entries. Since human nature and standards vary so widely, one theme that would rate a "C" from



one instructor could conceivably be given an "A" by another. This is undoubtedly why Instructor Snodgrass finds it difficult to fathom how "C" themes could possibly have been selected instead of his "A" contributions. Though these human differences in interpretations are allowable, critical analysis of all themes for originality of subject, as well as for content, and careful scrutiny of all papers for *finer* details of grammar and coherency would greatly minimize such human differences.

In the final analysis, however, the staff has created a powerful incentive to freshman writers. If the thought-provoking writings occasionally evidenced in previous issues continue to appear in *The Caldron* as examples and models, the campus will undoubtedly see a steady increase in the quality of freshman writing through the coming years.

## The Fraternity's Right to Discriminate

JAMES H. STEIN, JR.

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 6*

(*Author's note:* The author does not necessarily approve of the discrimination current in fraternities. Like Voltaire, however, he will defend to the end the fraternity's right to discriminate.)

EVERY FEW YEARS THE FRATERNITY SYSTEM IS BE-sieged by a small group of would-be abolitionists who, if they could have their way, would "integrate" every Greek-letter house on campus before sundown. Paradoxically, these thoughtless people consider themselves the champions of justice. Actually, they are attempting to abolish one of the fraternity's greatest rights: privacy.

These people fail to realize that the fraternity house is set up as a well-organized home. A fraternity is a large family, a group of men who work and relax together in a congenial family atmosphere. Like any household, the fraternity maintains the privacy of a well-ordered family.

Joining a fraternity is a privilege, not a right. Just as a family may invite to dinner friends of its choosing, and ignore others, so may a fraternity also pledge people who are compatible with the group, and ignore others whom it may not know or care to know. Since no one person or group of persons has the right to join a fraternity, there is no wrong done when a fraternity refuses to pledge a person or persons, for any reason.

This is all that need be said. Since, by its discrimination, the fraternity oversteps the rights of no one, such discrimination is legal. The reasons for the discrimination, be they financial, social, racial or religious, and the moral aspects of such discrimination, are clearly irrelevant.

# The Educational Value of TV Quiz Programs

SANDRA RAE LEBOE  
*Rhetoric Placement Theme*

NOW FOR \$150,000, MR. SCHULTZ, CAN YOU TELL US THE name of a President of the United States who was an ardent cricket fan, what famous match was played in his honor, the year the match took place, and the names of the participants?

How often we have heard questions of this highly obscure nature coming over our living room television sets. We are amazed at the unending flow of knowledge which pours out of contestants week after week. Our eyes are glued to the screen and we hold our breath while the contestant stumbles and cracks his knuckles. There is an audible sigh of relief when he finally tallies up another \$10,000 of his already fantastic winnings.

What do we gain by watching these quiz shows week after week? Very little, would be my reply. We might make mental note of a few isolated facts which we were heretofore unaware of, but there is no real educational value to be derived from TV viewing of this sort.

We realize that a great majority of the contestants are not necessarily people with educated backgrounds, but people who possess photographic memories. The contestant is an expert in one particular field and questions are geared to his realm of knowledge. Child prodigies and people of dubious mental alertness are not uncommon.

The fact remains that we are being entertained by these quiz programs. We are fascinated by the odd assortment of characters and the master of ceremonies' quips. True, we are impressed by the vast amount of knowledge displayed, but we do not associate these people with ourselves.

An educated person, in my opinion, is one who is as well-rounded in his information as he is in his personality. He is a mature individual who would never flaunt his knowledge in front of millions of viewers. He puts his education to use, in his home, community and business. He may not achieve a monetary reward for his intelligence, but he has the inner satisfaction of knowing that he is applying his knowledge.

Just as there are many differences between a quiz show contestant and a truly educated person, so there are differences between a quiz show and some program of educational value, such as a press conference. A quiz show addict is not harmful, as long as he does not mistake the gems of wisdom he secures from a half-hour program for an education that takes many, many years to acquire.



# The Little Buckle

STEVE BORN

*Rhetoric 101, Theme C*

UPON MY ARRIVAL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS I immediately noticed that the majority of the students on the campus were supporters of the Ivy League fad. Like a sickness, the Ivy League fad starts by affecting just a few, but it soon spreads far and wide, conquering the multitudes. My job was to put an end to this disease. But first let me diagnose it.

The symptoms of the illness are usually quite evident. A small, unique hat often adorns the patient's head. The hat is a bright, appalling plaid with a small buckle located in the rear. The shirt of the victim is something to behold. It is similar to the normal shirt in all respects except one. That one minor difference is in the placement of the buttons. Granted, it has buttons on the cuffs and the front, which is perfectly normal. But for some unknown reason, it has buttons at varying intervals on the collar also. This is known as a button-down collar. The pants of the victim are also novel in one respect. They possess a small buckle pasted across the seat. It has yet to be determined whether or not this buckle is holding together the pants or the patient. The little buckle can also be found on shoes, blouses, jackets, skirts, and even on other little buckles. Halting the buckle's advance was going to be a genuine challenge.

First I decided to get to the afflicted and discuss the problem sensibly. My attempt was a dismal failure. The Ivy Leaguers accused me of trying to change the nation's styling. My second plan was even less successful. I merely inquired about the chances of halting production on all Ivy League clothes, and I was forced to do some remarkable running to outdistance the manufacturers and designers who had come to lynch me. I was now forced to put my final plan into effect. I decided to display the absurdity of Ivy League clothes by making a public spectacle of myself wearing them. I went Ivy League. I wore clothes that were decorated from head to toe with buckles, and possessed the brightest greens, reds, and charcoals available. I had buttons surrounding the collar of my shirt. Now I was combating the Ivy League.

My results were astounding. I liked the buckle on the seat of my trousers; it made sitting down so uncomfortable. I enjoyed the feeling of security one can obtain only by having his neck buttoned down securely. Even the buckle on my shoes, which I was constantly tripping over, fascinated me. The whole pattern of my campaign was clear to me now: I had contaminated myself somewhere on the battlefield. I was the loser, having succumbed to the little buckle adorning my shoes, jacket, pants, and cap. And even more surprising, I liked being Ivy League.

# Out in the Cold

MARTHA SOLOMON

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 12*

ANOTHER SHARP, SNOW-FILLED GUST OF WIND BLEW against my back, and practically pushed me around the corner of the block. Instinctively I drew my coat collar closer around me and shoved my hands deeper into my pockets, although I did not really need to, for my coat was very warm and my gloves thick. With this reassuring thought of warmth flitting across my mind, I was startled to notice a small boy huddled against the stone molding which projected from a store front.

The child was visibly shaking, and this was certainly understandable, for his coat was thin and patched, as were his pants, and his shoes showed evidence that other pairs of feet had walked and run in them, for they were worn, and far too large for his feet. His shaggy blond hair, with no cap to cover it, fell into his face.

His face looked rather expressionless, but as I stooped down, his gaze focused on me, and a chill went up my spine to see the eyes, not of a child, but of one who had known suffering and the hard realities of the world about him.

Having taken my lunch hour, I was on my way back to the store where I worked, and so I timidly asked him to come along. Trying to read his thoughts, I added, "Loads of people stop in to warm up on days like this." He did come along, but again that strange feeling came over me, for when he stood up, he didn't hesitate, but yet he didn't do it with enthusiasm; he just came.

At the store we sat and munched on cookies left over from someone's lunch. He told me his name was Bob—not Bobbie, but Bob. In this instance and with each sentence he uttered, his apparent maturity appalled me. His solemnity never relaxed, although I tried and tried to make him smile.

As the afternoon wore on, I returned to him after each customer, for he was content to sit quietly and observe. However, when I started toward his chair once again, I found him gone, and no one had seen him leave. The independent and ragged little boy with the knowing eyes had once again stepped out into the cold.

# He Lives in the Past

JOAN HAYNES

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 3*

RIGHT AFTER DINNER THE OLD MAN HITCHED HIS suspenders up over his immense stomach and hobbled in to his rocking chair beside the television set. His daughter began clearing the table with a loud clatter and crash of dishes in the sink; his grandson stretched out on the floor and instructed his small son to turn on the television—loud; the great-grandson and great-granddaughter used their father's command as an



occasion for a noisy argument. Family dinners were always like that—noisy, nerve-wracking and always climaxed by the early leave-taking of the grandson and his family.

The old man's head was splitting, and his pipe tasted bitter—probably from the small red berries surreptitiously lodged there by the little boy. He had tried, earlier in the evening, to engage his grandson's wife in a discussion of entertainment nowadays compared to entertainment in his time, but her attention seemed to wander as she watched—unmoved—her small daughter "dressing up" in his own best hat and coat. A nice girl, his granddaughter-in-law, but a little empty-headed for his taste. His grandson used to hear him tell about hunting and fishing when the boy's father was still alive, but he too seemed uninterested of late. Of course, he had heard it all before, but memories were all that were left, and one would think the boy would like to hear about it occasionally.

Living with his daughter left the old man with much to be desired. He overheard snatches of remarks: ". . . ought to be satisfied there with Lila, nothing to do but eat and sleep. . . . I wouldn't take him, gadding around all the time, just wears her out. . . . so hard hearing; that television just blares all over the neighborhood." He didn't like to turn on the television because it made his eyes burn to sit close enough to hear it, but Lila was always telling him to go in and watch television; she could lift a heavy chair or carry a big sack of groceries easier herself than she could bother with his slow, painful attempts to help.

The family was good to him; they never hesitated or refused to get him anything he wanted, but they would glance at each other with a mocking smile or a frown of annoyance, depending on their mood, when he brought up an incident more than two weeks old. Visiting was a lost art, thought the old man. These days one didn't visit; one watched television and darn well liked it, or else! One didn't interrupt the news reports to tell how the Negroes would have been handled back in 1900. One didn't, that is, unless he could withstand a withering look from his daughter and polite but slightly annoyed glances from the rest of the viewers.

He had wondered, once, if an old friend of his—a rich man independent enough to live alone—didn't enjoy life now, but one afternoon's visit had convinced him that financial means didn't make the difference. His old friend was unhappy and neglected too. The difference was age—just old age. The hustling, busy younger generation just didn't have the time to listen to the interesting anecdotes of a past era.

The pattern was always the same: after his grandson gathered up the mischievous, cute, affectionate children and left, he would hunt up his cane and hobble into his room. After he cleaned his pipe out and lit fresh tobacco, he would take out his box of old pictures and go through them again. He especially liked one of his wife, taken when they were courting. Those were the days he liked to remember.



# Eloise

VERNALIE MOBERG

*Rhetoric 102, Book Report*

ON EXAMINING KAY THOMPSON'S DELIGHTFUL BOOK *Eloise*, a person's initial comment might well be "How sweet for the children," and a glance at the illustrations would certainly promote that conviction. Artist Hilary Knight has taken advantage of a variety of the techniques of contemporary juvenile art—fresh color, simple line drawings, and a cartoonist's impressionism—and, with Miss Thompson, has developed a principal character so utterly lovable and human that the only possible description is "Eloise." The incorrigible yellow straw (topped always with a candy-pink hair bow), the lace-collared, puffed-sleeved blouse and short, pleated skirt which refuse to agree upon a common waistline, and white knee-stockings matched with baby-doll patents, affirm, upon first observation, that the book was intended for a lollipop-consuming audience; yet, when the smug suggestion-of-a-mouth and the all-knowing, mischievous eyes are perceived, a person realizes the truth in the subtitle's warning, "A book for precocious grown-ups." Furthermore all doubts for the book's maturity are removed when, on the first page, Eloise herself announces with the stance and superlative dignity of Gainsborough's *Blue Boy* "I am Eloise. I am six."

With this profound statement as beginning, Eloise proceeds, in her own incoherent way, to relate the story of her exciting life at the Plaza, the exclusive hotel where she resides with her English nurse, Nanny. Consequently, within a modicum of time, the reader has become intimately acquainted with Eloise and Nanny as well as with Wennie, Skipper Dee, Sabina and Saylor (Eloise's dog, turtle, and dolls, respectively) and the rest of the crowd at the Plaza. Skillful narrative and almost perfectly collaborated drawings carry the reader through episodes in the daily life of Eloise on cycles of intellectual snickers. While this characteristic of light entertainment is an integral and undeniable part of *Eloise*, the unappreciated great significance of the book is the philosophical message communicated through the clear, unprejudiced (at least by the reader's specific beliefs) eyes of a child—the invitation to the reader to look within himself and others—and laugh.

This subtle invitation to introspection is accomplished by a light, nearly frivolous, journalistic style. The author influences her reader to question the mores of society and of individual behavior by first letting him enjoy himself, then alluding to the truth involved in Eloise's pint-size but astronomical witticisms. The entertainment is achieved most obviously through three basic techniques—simple thought pattern and syntax, loose story structure (planned this way purposely by the author to display juvenile laxity of organization, or

spontaneity), and a vocabulary evidencing the child's complete assimilation of environment.

In the first place, a simplicity of thought structure is employed to please the reader. One of Eloise's favorite locutions, for instance, is exemplified in the following passage:

"Here's what I can do  
Chew gum  
Write  
Spell  
Stand on my head for the longest amount of time . . .  
And here's the thing of it  
Most of the time I'm on the telephone"

The disregard for sufficient and proper sentence structure and punctuation on the part of Miss Thompson is justified in that the more direct, subconscious style of expression, which is facilitated by the colorful illustrations, appeals almost instantly to psychological word association. Connotation is of primary concern.

Organization—or disorganization as the case may be—also implements an enjoyment of the book. While this is probably only an elaboration of the previous phase, of indiscriminate order within the sentence, the loosely organized plot *en masse* is of greater significance, for an over-all impression is obtained from it. The reader remembers the unique methods of Eloise for riding elevators, calling room service, getting up in the morning, visiting the assorted rooms of the hotel, and, in general, finding excitement, more than any one specific quotation from the book.

Most memorable of all Kay Thompson's methods of communication is her will for Eloise to mimic. Expressions such as the pantomime of Nanny ("Nanny says she would rawther I didn't talk talk talk all the time"), references to the waiter Renee ("*Bonjour, Eloise, voici votre petit déjeuner*"), and the over-all light satire of adult conversation ("My mother has A T & T stock and she knows an ad man". . . "an office on Madison Avenue". . . "for Lord's sake". . . "méringue glacée") appeal to the average sense of humor but leave a note of tragedy with the thought that children depend upon and believe so completely in adults while grown-ups do extremely little to uphold the trust.

*Eloise*, even publishers admit, is sold basically as light entertainment, and nothing will ever come of any forementioned underlying significance because of the limited scope of the material involved. Its authors, in fact, had only fun in mind when they collaborated upon the book. Kay Thompson is a dancer, and Hilary Knight has other interests in the commercial art of the magazine world. Still, *Eloise* must be admired, in that few books attain such volatility and simultaneously express so deep a message.

All in all, *Eloise* is simply a portrait of Eloise, and the beaming six-year-



old child is the embodiment of the secret child desires of every human soul. The reader, having experienced the book twice (once for sake of humor and again for an analysis of purpose) will find in himself, if he gazes honestly into a mirror, a remnant yet of his juvenile capricious longings. He will recognize that they are now clothed in the inhibitions of modern society's protocol, and, if he has been successful in his perusals of *Eloise* and is basically sincere, he will laugh. Then, he will consider his own goals and accomplishments. "Are they so superior," he will ask, "to the childlike ideals and deeds of *Eloise*?"

## The Horse and I

KAY FRANKLIN

*Rhetoric 101, Final Theme*

I HAVE SPENT MANY HOURS HORSEBACK RIDING, ALONE, going no specific place, in no hurry. During my rides I have had time to look at, and really see, some of the wonders of my country, some of the works of God. I discovered that each tree, each timid animal, each wild flower was at once both an individual and a member of a group, neither a conformist nor a rebel. I found, and learned to find, qualities of beauty in the most forlorn, twisted oak, as well as in the lovely, praised violet. An originality and a magnificence seldom paralleled I saw in the sunrises and sunsets. An awareness that the beauty of nature was far from superficial started growing in me.

But this awareness was not the only thing that sprang to life through my associations with horses. It was during these associations that I first conceived the idea that I would slow down and not rush through life. When a person spends a large amount of time in solitude, he tends to be introspective, to ask himself just what he intends to get out of life and what he intends to do with the precious years given him. My riding offered me this chance for solitude and introspection. Out of the latter has grown my belief that I must take my time in doing the things I enjoy, as long as I am not harming another person or myself.

My understanding of human nature has, like my awareness of nature, also benefited from time spent with horses. Spoil a horse to an extreme and he becomes mean and hard to control or handle. Love him and treat him gently and he responds. Tease him and he becomes stubborn, rebellious. Pay no need to his feelings, and he returns the indifference.

So, when I get in a car and drive at a reasonable speed though it would be more of a thrill to go faster, when I show respect for the people and objects which surround me, when I am observant of the natural world, I am not just reflecting my parents' and my teachers' instructions; I am also reflecting hours spent with horses.

# A Cup of Tea

LOUIS J. HUHSMAN

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 4*

IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL SPRING DAY AND ALL THE WORLD was alive with the joy of re-birth. He could feel the leaves growing and the flowers popping out, even there in the quiet of the cubed island on the third floor of the Art Building. A dart of light fell over his blank canvas and he followed it out the window up to its beginning in the blue. He was thinking.

He was short for his age and knew it. Most of his friends thought of him as a sort of freak. In his possession, however, was a talent none of them could claim; he was an "artist." His quiet, deliberate character demanded that he think that Art was his true love. For the past year he had wondered if he could live this lie born of doubt and bad work.

There was a faint sound from behind him. He realized that there was someone in that small room with him. His unstained brush tightened in his hand and he could feel the red flushing his face. Who else could it be but the Special Art teacher? Slowly he turned, his eyes not wanting to look. There she was, short and fat, wearing that same old drab dress, silently preparing to brew a pot of tea.

Her actions were as always, quick and decisive. Their eyes had not met, even though each of them knew the other was present. In a moment he felt a part of what she was doing, as she poured a second cupful of the steaming brew. The tea seemed to give a silent invitation to both of them. They both sat down. Looking across the table was easier now. She had put him at ease by her actions alone. There was no one in the world now but the two of them.

His thoughts went back to a few seconds ago, and he wondered just how long she had been watching him in his daydream. It was not until he drew his last, sweet sip from the cup that he knew what she meant without speaking a word. He felt he really knew her now, but more important was the fact that what he was doing was correct. In that unknown span of time his life was not changed, but illuminated for a split second so that his future was clearly visible.

Still without a word, she collected the cups and spoons, placed them in the shallow sink, and left the room as quietly as she had entered.

Before long he stood and, with a smile on his face, gazed at the brush. It did not speak, of course, but it seemed to smile back. The inspiration had come at last and he knew it. He mixed the pigments with a vigor he had never known before. A quick glance at the blank canvas was enough to plot the first strokes. The scene was wet before him. How much time had gone by? How much energy had he used? He did not care to look at his watch nor did he feel fatigued. This new feeling of rightness had made him forget all material things.



For the remainder of his life, he knew, he would communicate his ideas and thoughts to his fellow man on canvas. Yes, now he knew with certainty where he was going.

Just what would become of him in the next five or ten years was uncertain, but one fact was sure: he was on the right road to personal satisfaction. There were many years of study ahead, so many facts to absorb. He knew that this study was not a diversion from the original road to his goal, but a very important step in becoming, first, a fully developed individual.

Perhaps some day his works would hang for the world to judge, but this was not his goal. To express himself to his fellow man, to give him something to enjoy, perhaps to cherish—this was the ultimate.

What would his life be if it had not been for that silent cup of tea?

## The Fighter

KLAUS E. BIALLOWONS

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 7*

A FEW DAYS AGO A NAVY JET FIGHTER FIRED SEVERAL bursts from its cannon and then went into a shallow dive. With incredible speed it not only overtook its own shells but hit several of them so hard that the damage forced the pilot to crash land.

At first glance one might shrug the incident off as just another freak training accident—and perhaps that is all it was. I cannot, however, resist the temptation to read a deeper meaning into this mechanical suicide, because of its timeliness in a world bent on self-destruction. You may call it a tribute to man's eternal follies.

Give a match to a child playing in a haystack and you are inviting disaster. He may understand the mechanism of rubbing the match against a coarse surface to produce a flame, but he will never be able to visualize the consequences. Yesterday he was able to run away from the flames and watch the scene in detached fascination, always tempted and ready to repeat the trick. Tomorrow the flames may engulf him, and his feeble cries will be lost in the devastation.

Ever since our ancestors earned for themselves the title of *Homo sapiens*, man has been using his unique intellectual powers to improve his lot. And since that day, too, he has viciously and bitterly, bloodily and unmercifully, fought for every little gain and victory on the long, arduous road. In just a few thousand years' time, man has amassed a wealth of knowledge about the world surrounding him. He has wanted to understand his world and master it, but, above all, he has strived to understand himself. Yet there is a wide difference between the physical maturity reached by individuals within a generation and the maturity of all mankind, our goal and destiny.

Throughout history man has never ceased believing that every technical advance carried within itself the key to his paradise; the end of all strife and bloodshed. And as each generation succeeds the old one, that belief is renewed and rekindled into the fairy tale that shall shortly become truth.

To find his truth, man has built and created; not finding it, he has destroyed that which he built and created. He has turned ugliness into beauty and beauty into ugliness in his ceaseless quest, as a child will do to avoid boredom. But the match must be a bigger one and the conflagration more powerful every time, to retain fascination.

With all his technical know-how there is one fact which man, today more than ever, refuses or fails to understand, namely, that he is still as far from understanding and finding the ultimate truth as were the first feeble mortals. Generations of philosophers have preceded us, generations will follow, without hope of changing the question mark to one of exclamation. And as the mind supplies no answer, man is determined to use his physical powers to conquer and destroy the intangible. He has always feared and hated that which he cannot understand, and destruction has always been the convenient method of eliminating it. If the direct object of his mystification is not available, someone or something—the scapegoat—will suffer his fury. When the elements were to be appeased, man made sacrifices to his gods. If the gods remained silent, there were always witches to be burned at the stake.

Man has always hated the gods that hold him in their power, and whenever opportunity beckoned he set out to destroy them. So far he has not succeeded. Several thousand years ago men built the tower of Babel to invade and destroy the kingdom of the gods. Today men threaten to annihilate their God with the atomic bomb. Yes, we are powerful today. We are capable of destroying everything we have built and perhaps everything that we know.

Jet planes and cannons behave according to the laws of pre-nuclear physics which most of us comprehend somewhat dimly. When we get a plane that can outspeed its own bullets, it looks as if things may be getting out of control.

Oh, who is worrying! The whole incident was just one of those things, a slight miscalculation. After all, these mechanical gadgets are our own creation; we control them, and they react according to our wishes. Development demands that they become progressively bigger and more powerful, and this is as it should be. The power of the hydrogen bomb is now expressed in megatons of TNT instead of pounds. Well, admittedly, we have a little trouble controlling the effects of the bomb, and there is that bothersome radioactive fallout to contend with. But a lot of this has been exaggerated. So there are a few scientists who shout about the dangers. What do they know about the affairs of the world? We have made it this far; nothing can happen to us.

Then again, perhaps we should try the assault on Him now, while we are ahead. There is an excellent chance of winning; He is probably not expecting trouble at the moment. Besides, who knows, things might actually get out of hand some day. You have to beat Him to the draw if you want to survive . .



# A Poetic Novel

JUDITH RAPHAEL

*Rhetoric 101, Book Report*

"Memory believes what knowing remembers. Believes longer than recollects, longer than knowing even wonders."

—WILLIAM FAULKNER

WILLIAM FAULKNER WROTE A POEM AND HE CALLED IT *Light in August*. Technically, *Light in August* is a novel. The foremost literary critics of America have even proclaimed it a most distinguished novel. However, in this book, as in most of his writing, Faulkner does not spill out the beauty of his mind in the conventional patterns. He tends to ignore punctuation and run sentences together, but his prose possesses the sense of poetry. When reading poetic prose, I often wonder where the prose leaves off and the poetry begins. This is a matter of opinion. To me, Faulkner's writing is poetry. Therefore I say, William Faulkner wrote a poem and called it *Light in August*.

Although it contains the Faulkner touch of fantasy, this "poem" is not just a mass of musical words pieced together to thrill the senses. Its message is very real because Faulkner's deep perception of reality is so very astounding in its acuity.

To see the genius of the author's description, you must look from a distance. His style of writing takes you deeply into the story. You find yourself so involved that you do not have time to analyse the book's details. The only analysis I can make is in the form of a feeling that Faulkner's writing invokes in me. When Faulkner describes something, I not only sense, but know, that this thing could never be seen in any other way. Faulkner's descriptive powers are part of his magic.

*Light in August* has a message. Faulkner tells of two origins of the destiny of mankind. He speaks of man's fate as an inner force he is born with and as a force that is derived from man's relation to man.

A perfect example of his idea of inner destiny is to be found in Lena Grove. Lena Grove is pregnant, carrying an illegitimate child with all the complacency of the world. Her past life, as the ward of an uninterested older brother, may have been a contributing cause of her rather precarious position. But, somehow, she does not feel that Faulkner was using her position as a chance to tell a tale of woe. The author seems more concerned with where Lena derived her peace of mind. Faulkner seems to feel that this complacency in Lena is there because she senses her destiny as an inherent force that will take care of her. Other characters in *Light in August* also sense their fates. Johanna Burden certainly must have known her destiny or she would not have said so plaintively, "Don't make me have to pray yet. Dear God, let me be damned a little longer, a little while."

It is hard to differentiate between the destiny in man that is inherent and the fate that is pressed on him by mankind. I feel Faulkner is trying to relate both of these forces. Not only do the characters in *Light in August* seem to have their special fates and know them, but they also seem to affect the destinies of one another. Joe Christmas is especially affected by mankind. In my opinion Joe is the essential being in *Light in August*. The message of the book is his story.

Christmas is a thief, a rapist, and a murderer. This should make him a villain, but somehow his villainy is a paradox. Faulkner does not excuse any of Joe's evil deeds. However, the author's portrayal of this lonely, half-crazed man is so sympathetic that I could never condemn Christmas. This is Faulkner's magic again. I wonder if Joe's destiny was not determined by the people in his life. Maybe it was the unwed mother he never knew, or the Negro blood in his father's seed. It might have been the cold, God-fearing family who adopted him as a child, who shaped Joe's future. I believe it was all of them. Using Christmas as an example, Faulkner seems to be telling us, in his own style, a bit of philosophy I heard in a very old poem: "No man is an island. No man stands alone. Each man as my brother. Each man as my own."

At times Faulkner seems to wander from his main theme, and at times he becomes rather repetitious. In spite of this, the plot of *Light in August* does not lose its meaning, nor does the "poem" ever lose its beauty.

## Conscience in a Practical World

MERLE GORDON

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 5*

I WAS TIRED OF TALKING ABOUT CONSCIENCE IN THE ABSTRACT, so I listed about a dozen matters into which the thing we call "conscience" would enter. Looking over this list, I was struck by one thing: it is often hard to tell where conscience leaves off and fear begins. In deciding "Should I or should I not do something?" the question becomes, not "How will I feel afterward?" but "Can I get away with it?"

I had better not murder anybody, partly because something tells me it is not right, but mainly because the world will not abide it. I must not leave my wife and forty-eight kids, as the Army expression goes, for the same reason. Fear keeps me in check, and my conscience need not enter into the picture at all.

In our building we had a five-year-old thief named Tommy Thompson. Tommy was caught red-handed by my father after stealing some foreign coins from our apartment. My father immediately sat Tommy down and painted a vivid picture of jail. I told him that this was the wrong approach, and that I should try to make Tommy understand that stealing is wrong in itself. F

greed, but said that he didn't feel himself equal to the task. How would one go about making someone else feel conscience, anyway?

I have said that there are certain things the world will not tolerate. On the other hand, suppose that one subdues his conscience, takes a risk on something or other, and comes out ahead? The practical world likes that. The practical world contains many people like that. The lawyer who is just starting out sits alone with his conscience, while the semi-illiterate he graduated from high school with is a rich bookmaker. The bookmaker, the apple-polisher, the bribe-taker, the cheater say: "You have to be practical to get ahead," and maybe the lawyer kicks himself and says: "Look at them. They're happy. All right, maybe they'll get their come-uppance sometime. When? In hell? They're not worried about that." Still he can't take the step and become like them, because he knows he won't think much of himself if he does.

There are times, I'm sure, when everyone has felt that conscience has no place whatsoever in a practical world. Some individuals at this point break with their conscience. If they can effect a complete break, they will probably be happy afterwards. If they cannot rid themselves of the desire for self-respect, the world can be practical or not, but they won't be happy again.

## How to Get Ahead in Life

TOM PRIEBE

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 7*

THESE DAYS TOO MANY YOUNG MEN FEEL THAT ONCE they get their doctorate at Harvard and then put in a few short years at Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, they'll immediately be besieged by employers eager to offer them positions as T.V. repairmen or district political leaders. *Not so!* Competition in all fields has never been keener. Good intentions are not enough. The key to success in both the business and social world is self-confidence. I can show you how to get rid of the lousy personality you now have and build a new, dominating, and magnetic one that will change your whole life. Here are my four rules, four logical, common-sense suggestions that will work personality magic.

Rule 1: Eliminate all signs of self-doubt!

Rule 1 is the basic rule. Once you have mastered it, the others will come easily. Start now by saying to yourself (no matter how ridiculous it may seem at first): I am just as good as the next fellow. I am just as good as the next fellow. After saying it to yourself for a while, start saying it to the next fellow, and if possible, the fellow next to the next fellow. This self-testimonial will not only bolster your ego, but it will also help you make many valuable "contacts."

Constantly tell yourself (and the next fellow) that you are brainy, witty,



rich, and Napoleon Bonaparte. (Regarding Bonaparte, you'll avoid complications if you tell this only to yourself.)

**Rule 2: Radiate energy and vitality!**

No one responds to a negative idea. Always think and act positively. When you enter a room, move fast. Slap people on the back unexpectedly. Grip their lapels. Poke them forcefully with your forefinger to emphasize points. If you have no point to emphasize, poke them anyway. Let them know you're there.

First impressions will last for years, and the quickest way to make a first impression is to develop a dynamic handshake—one that people will remember. If you're so feeble that your normal grip feels like a half-pound of beef liver be ingenious. Conceal in the palm of your hand an electric buzzer or warm chocolate bar. Such a tactful gesture will never fail to make a lasting impression on that prospective client.

**Rule 3: Always talk down to people!**

This rule is a "must" for the truly self-confident person. Talking down to people puts them in their place. It is a cinch that you don't have enough intelligence or wit to talk down to people intellectually; consequently, talk down to them physically. When you get into a conversation, stand on a chair. You'll be surprised how this simple device will give you a sense of power and authority, especially if you punctuate your monologue with potent expressions like "Get it? Don't interrupt! Pay attention!" and "Paste that in your pipe and smoke it!" Practice this method of positive speaking constantly. It will develop your self-assurance, vocabulary, and sense of balance. It may also get you elected to the Senate.

**Rule 4: Make other people feel insecure!**

An attitude of unmitigated sincerity is essential to Rule 4. First, study everyone with whom you come in contact, and then point out their weaknesses to them, frankly and honestly. For instance, here is how the rule works: before getting down to business with that prospective client, set the stage. Tell the prospect that he should do something about the unsightly hair in his ear. Point out that his vest is in bad taste, and mention that wearing a tight belt merely emphasizes his protruding stomach, instead of concealing it. Suggest a dentist who could certainly make him a set of more natural looking bridge work. Make a joke about the amount of dandruff you can see on his head from your vantage point (you, of course, are standing on your chair: Rule 3). He may throw you out of his office, but he will admire your poise and self-assurance.

You now know the secrets that will give you access to the untapped reservoirs of vitality and self-reliance. If, until today, you have been worried because you were unsuccessful, had no friends, and didn't know why, you may now change all this by merely putting these four fool-proof rules to work.

# Reflections Through a Looking Glass

RAE LESSER

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 9*

ALICE IN WONDERLAND WENT THROUGH A LOOKING glass and returned with a new insight into the world she knew. Sensing a parallel between her experience and the one I had just undergone, I shivered involuntarily, and felt the skin at the back of my neck prickle. I was possessed by the sensation of being newly aware of the world I lived in. Further stimulating my comparison were the reflections of myself which confronted me from many of the surrounding polished glass cases. I was forced to review the reasons for my impressions. Why did I suddenly feel as if I had undergone an experience similar to Alice's? Was this my hall of mirrors—this almost deserted corridor of a musty museum?

Before I surrendered to the call of my imagination, my mood had been quite objective and uninspired. I had been completely absorbed in my task of noting the physical characteristics of a skull on view in the glass case before me. But I paused from my note taking for a few moments and let my thoughts wander. No longer was I viewing a mere yellowed ellipse of bone but a mysterious link with a half-remembered chapter in man's past. My mind provided a covering of flesh and blood for the inanimate mass of bone behind the glass. While inspecting the ancient skull of a Mound Builder Indian, identified as that of a "female below middle age," I visualized a face—with an identity and a past. Who had this girl been? How had she died? Childbirth, disease, war—what had caused her death? Had she been considered pretty? But the answer remained locked away, as inaccessible to me as the skull sealed in the glass case for display in the University of Illinois Museum of Natural History.

From the information given on the description card, I was able to surmise little. The skull was that of a girl who had lived in Illinois ages before its emergence as a state. The girl had died here centuries before the University of Illinois was born from a dream in the minds of recent men. And now her skull is exhibited in a museum at this university.

For a long moment I felt incapable of even the slightest movement. I could only stare at the relic of a dead past, and see a symbol of a distant future. Disturbing, unanswerable questions rose to the fore of my thoughts. Does this skull symbolize an irrevocable glimpse into modern man's fate? In the museums what society will the skulls of Atomic Age Man be preserved? Will there still be a society when the Atomic Age has receded to a mere musty page in the annals of the Earth's history?

Still haunted by the vivid mental images of past and future that I had con-

jured, I turned to leave the almost-deserted corridor of the Museum of Natural History. Or was I returning from the land behind the looking glass?

## Putting on Her Face

DORIS L. GOULD

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 8*

IF I EVER WANT A GOOD LAUGH FOR NOTHING, I SIT DOWN and watch my roommate "put on her face" before a date. She really makes an art of burying her face beneath several layers of cosmetics. There is a more or less set pattern to her ritual. First of all she sets before her an array of various-sized bottles and jars containing colorful liquids, creams, and pastes. Neatly piled to one side are towels, Kleenex, and toothpicks. She begins work on her face by opening a jar of pink cold cream and smearing it liberally on her face and neck. The cold cream, which is left on for fifteen minutes, takes the place of washing her face. According to the manufacturer of the cold cream soap and water are harmful to one's face, whereas his product "soothes, smooths, and cleanses" the face safely and effectively.

When the cold cream has done its job, she wipes it off with a piece of Kleenex and opens a bottle of a red-orange concoction. She carefully measures out one teaspoonful of it and pours it into a small cup. Then, with a small brush, she applies the liquid to her face. For the next twenty minutes she cannot smile or talk because the liquid hardens to a hideous brittle mask on her face. After the interlude of silence she washes the mask off with ice-cold water. By this time her poor face is beet-red. She calmly says that the reason for this is the fact that her circulation has been stimulated.

To cover her blushing face, she has to put on make-up base. She measures it out on two toothpicks because if she uses too much, her face will be ruined and colored. After rubbing the make-up base onto her face and neck, she applies pink rouge generously to her cheeks. She next outlines her eyelids with black pencil. On her eyelids she applies black, brown, blue, or green eye shadow—depending on her mood. She darkens her eyebrows with brown or black eyebrow pencil and makes her eyelashes more beautiful with black, brown, or blue mascara—again depending upon her mood. At the corners of her eyes next to her nose she places a tiny red dot—for that "youthful look."

On top of all the goo already mentioned she fluffs on huge quantities of powder, most of which she then wipes off. She finishes her task by putting on, with a lipstick brush, one of her many shades of lipstick.

With her face thus disguised she gayly prances off to meet her date, who will no doubt end up with her "face" all over the shoulder of his dark blue sport coat.



# Why?

ROBERT MATCHETT

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 6*

SANCTUS, SANCTUS, SANCTUS . . ." SOMEWHERE IN the distance a bell chimes three times. The priest, very close to the altar now, raises the Sacred Host above his head and chants the canon of the Mass: "This is my body which is given for you . . ." After a moment of silent meditation, he takes into his hands the chalice in which the wine is contained. "This is the chalice of my blood . . ." As he elevates the chalice above his head, I know that a very wonderful thing has taken place: mere bread and wine have become the consecrated body and blood of Christ.

Some people would say that this is completely absurd. It has no factual proof. It is not even reasonable. How can a priest make God out of a piece of bread? It just isn't sensible. I find it impossible to explain to such people my "reason" for believing in the Mass. In fact, to be perfectly honest, there is no rational explanation. Admittedly, I take the Mass completely on faith. This faith stems from something within me. I do not know what, or where, or how; but I do not really care. It is always there, and that is what matters to me.

The Mass is offered to the greater glory of God. It lies at the heart of the Universal Faith. To one who must ask "How?" and "Why?" it has no meaning, but for the believer it holds the mystery of life. He does not need tangible proof, for he does not regard religion as a rigorous science. Indeed, he regards it as the single thing which transcends all understanding, knowledge, and logic. In the region beyond the realm of research, the scientist can only close his eyes and say, "There is nothing here. I cannot see it." But he has never been able to *prove* this belief he holds. Is my faith to be criticized because it cannot be poured into a test tube? I do not think so. I do not pretend to have conclusive proof for what I believe to be the greatest truth in life. But who is to say what *is* the truth in the domain beyond the grasp of the human mind?

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SPRING is the time when young boys begin to oil and polish their bicycles, rusted from lack of use; the time when mothers may be seen beating their rugs and cleaning their houses as if they were rubbing the sleep out of the corners.

FRANCIS BAMBURG, *Rhetoric 101, Theme 1*

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HELL has lost its fury because religion has lost its fervor.

ELIZABETH WASSON, *Rhetoric 101, Theme 6*

# Rhet as Writ

For some reason, back in the early part of the twentieth century, it was almost considered a sin to show a part of the body unexposed.

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. . . my giant steps will not be mere gambles at high steaks . . .

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Yes, hunger is the only seasoning that can take any food, such as a lowly piece of beard and give it that divine taste.

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Any housewife would probably find her husband pleasantly shocked, if she would ask him to play golf, bowl, or wrestle with her.

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Everyman can become a psychologists just by reading Fraud.

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After four semesters of writing on "The Poppy Seed, USA," and "Spring Time, Garden Time," the individual will have of necessity developed those characteristics we describe as fatalism and intestinal fortitude of the brain.

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Also, it is good for parents to impress on teenagers the dangers and the possibilities of pre-marital relations.

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PE is very necessary; we need a strong body to carry our head around on.

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Ever since my first history book back in the elementary grades, I have been inclined to devour everyone that comes within my reach.

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He and his wife decided to have twelve children on their wedding day, six boys and six girls.

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I saw the little black dog of the lady next door, whom I had helped to raise when only a puppy.

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The city of my choice is geographically located which will make it possible to enjoy the four wonderful seasons each year.

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Babe Ruth became as famous or even more famous than George Washington for hitting home runs.

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All of these reasons contributed to my choosing Illinois as the university from which I would like to obtain my college degree and spend the greater part of the next four years of my life.





## The Contributors

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